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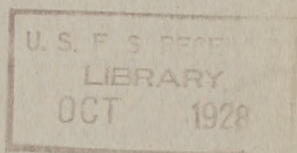
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FOREST PRODUCTS RESEARCH IN PICTURES

NO. 56

**THICK SAWS PAY HEAVY
TRIBUTE TO SAWDUST PILE**



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MADISON, WISCONSIN**

The sawyer who made a false start in the end of this 2-inch maple board left an impressive record of the proportion of a log that is converted to sawdust. In the mill where this board was sawed the wide-gauge circular saws convert to sawdust about one-fourth of the log exclusive of slabs when 1-inch boards are being cut and about one-eighth of the slabbed log when 2-inch boards are cut. The average is about one-fifth for all the output. This means in effect that every fifth log coming to the mill goes simply to swell a sawdust pile that already dwarfs the mill itself and to increase the slab pile. None of the sawdust at this mill is used for fuel, although much high-grade "waste" material which might be cut into small dimension stock is fed to the boilers.

Where all or a part of the sawdust is used for fuel - there is no other possible use for it at most mills - it yields some return in power, but where it is merely dumped as it is here it becomes an incumbrance and a nuisance. There is little or no market for old sawdust, the pile grows to cover many acres, and once catching fire it may smolder for years and become enough of a nuisance to drive people nearby from their homes. The ground where the pile stands must eventually be cleared of the sawdust at a terrific expense or remain worthless for all time.

The use of narrow-gauge band head saws reduces considerably the amount of lumber lost in the form of sawdust. The installation of this equipment would be especially desirable in those regions where the timber is all but exhausted and where the remaining timber supply should for that reason be the more carefully exploited. Here operators frequently are not inclined to buy band saw equipment because of the few years of operation ahead. Their backwardness is in some cases justified but on many operations the more efficient saws would return their installation cost and pay regular dividends before the failure of the timber supply. It is estimated that over 600 million cubic feet of wood could be saved annually by substituting narrow-gauge band saws for thick circular saws in the operations where this change is practicable.

Photographs by Forest Products Laboratory, U. S. Forest Service



